

Remarks—General

Claims in this Amendment are narrowed from prior claim efforts. These claims include the structure enabling cart collapse for compact storage. Applicant's previous claims had focused too narrowly on the surprising accomplishments of small shelves acting as supports and fulcrums for reduced-weight basket transfers between cart and destination. Applicant now realizes that without compact cart folding, allowing convenient stowage of both cart and loaded baskets in shoppers' cars, this cart would be far less useful. So the folding and telescoping elements have been added to make the claims complete.

Prior art, as reflected in my Supplemental Disclosure citations (Form PTO/SB/08A attached, with document copies) appears to place U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2004/0113381 A1 by Bergia closest to my invention, in that his cart carries two baskets situated transversely to the cart's spine, suggestive of the configuration of my cart as shown in my Fig. 1. But Bergia's cart lacks my ledges to carry most of the weight of basket and contents while it is being levered from cart to destination. Bergia's cart user must therefore lift the full weight of each basket in order to transfer it from cart to a tabletop or car trunk. Furthermore, his structure forces that full-weight lift not only for basket transfers but also to obtain release from his basket locking devices. His cart remains quite bulky to store after the limited collapse allowed by his spine sector removal.

U.S. patent 2,212,053 to Smith (1940) wastes much storage space by giving more of it to basket handles than to baskets. Smith lacks my ledges, my basket locks, and my compact center-folding spine.

Stanley, in U.S. patent Re. 25,616 (1964), improves on supermarket carts by getting his lowest support platform up well above the floor, but offers too little cargo space for his stated purpose.

Edmonston, in U.S. patent 2,962,292 (1960), makes his cart easy to maneuver with large-diameter wheels similar to mine in my preferred embodiment of Fig. 1. However, his cart does not fold compactly for convenient use in shopping.

UNEXPECTED BENEFIT of this invention: We made a tall cart for convenient loading in the store, and small ledges for compact folding of the unloaded cart. Only after using the prototype for actual shopping, car loading, and home delivery did we finally discover the unexpected benefit of the combination of small ledges and their height. The surprise: you never again need to lift the full weight of a basket of groceries, if you use this cart.

This is how it works: release the lock on the upper basket. Using the ledge as fulcrum, tilt the basket down toward the table beside the cart. Slide the basket along the fulcrum until basket touches down on tabletop. Now the basket has bridged the distance from fulcrum to tabletop. As the basket moves, weight is transferred progressively from cart ledge fulcrum to tabletop. At no point in this transfer do you ever support all the basket's weight. You support part, the ledge supports part, and the destination surface supports part as the transfer proceeds.

The other basket transfers follow the same pattern. For example, you tilt the lower basket upward toward the sill of your car trunk. Bridge the gap by sliding the basket. Move the weight from cart to car without ever lifting more than a fraction of the load.

Very respectfully,



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